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UNITED NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CONF.85/L.65
17 July 1992

ENGLISH ONLY

SIXTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
New York, 25 August-3 September 1992
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN THEIR REGIONS AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE FIFTH CONFERENCE

Nomenclature in Australia, 1992

Paper submitted by Australia**

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* E/CONF.85/1/Rev.1.

** Prepared by the Geographical Names Board of South Australia.

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Introduction

The past five years have seen many changes in relation to the State and Territory nomenclature authorities within Australia.

Alteration to legislation, organisation and procedures have impacted on the nomenclature authorities, as detailed in the individual reports. Current investigations into public service functions undertaken in many States with a view to streamlining will also have an effect, however, the results of this will not be fully evident for some time.

Public awareness in the activities of nomenclature authorities is increasing. Although there are many benefits to this, it is also increasing the work load on the authorities.

The Committee For Geographical Names in Australasia (CGNA) continues to provide a valuable forum for the development of national nomenclature guidelines and the examination of issues of national importance. Among other things, the CGNA is presently working towards publishing a set of national nomenclature guidelines and establishing a set of guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander place names.

Australia has also recently become a member of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names - Asia, South East and Pacific, South West Division.

Listed below are the reports from the individual nomenclature authorities.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

AUTHORITY

Nomenclature Committee

C/- Department of the

Environment, Land and Planning

Land Information Office

G.P.O. Box 1908

CanberraCity 2601-

Historically the naming of Districts, Divisions, major Arterial Roads and Streets in the Australian Capital Territory was determined under the National Memorials Ordinance which was repealed in 1987. The determination of Public Place Names, Nomenclature, for Territory Land in the Australian Capital Territory is now issued under the Public Place Names Act 1989. A Nomenclature Committee was formed in 1991, to determine guidelines under the Public Place Names Act 1989.

The principal responsibility for place naming in the Australian Capital Territory lies with the Minister for the Environment, Land and Planning. The Minister is advised by the Nomenclature Committee which follows the guidelines set but under the Public Place Names Act 1989. The Committee consists of six Members, the Manager of the Land Information Office (chairman), the Secretary of the Department of the Environment, Land and Planning, the First Assistant Secretary of the Land Division, the Chief Territory Planner, the Director of the Environment Land and Planning and the Nomenclature Executive Officer. The committee meets at approximately three-month intervals to discuss various policy issues and proposed and suggested names for new Divisions, Major Arterial Roads and Streets in the Australian Capital Territory.

The Committee is bound by the guidelines set out in the Public Place Names Act 1989 section 6.(1). When making a determination in respect of the naming of a division, the Minister shall have regard to the names of persons who have made notable contributions to the existence of Australia as a nation.

(2) When making a determination in respect of the naming of a public place, the Minister shall have regard to

(a) the names of persons famous in Australian exploration, navigation, pioneering, colonisation, administration, politics, education. science or letters

(b) the names of persons who have made notable contributions to the existence of Australia as a nation;

(c) the name of Australian Flora;

(d) the names of things characteristic of Australia or Australians; and

(e) the vocabulary of the Aboriginal race of Australia.

The Nomenclature Committee assesses all proposals and enquires related to public place names of territory land in the Australian Capital Territory. Submissions are received from various organisations and from individual members of the community.

The Nomenclature Committee, Statutory Functions is located on the 2nd floor Annex, John Overall Offices, 220 Northbourne Avenue, Braddon, Canberra City 2601.

Phone: 062 71942

Fax: 062 71944

STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES

AUTHORITY

Geographical Names Board of New South Wales

c/o Department of Conservation and Land Managment

P.O. Box 143

Bathurst NSW 2795

BACKGROUND

The Geographical Names Board is a Statuatory Authority established in 1966 and is administered by the Department of Conservation and Land Managment.

Initially, the Board's primary focus was on the collection, validation and registration of geographical names. This was tied to the continuing map review and publication programme of the Central Mapping Authority

The system of registration of geographical names has altered over the years. Advances in technology have seen a change from the manual card index registration system to an electronic data base. Map production is also handled electronically.

The marrige of the textual geographical names data base and the graphic mapping process seems likly to be accomplished in the near future.

Technological advances have been accompanied by a growing interest in heritage and local history which naturally involves the socialogical aspects of geographical naming.

The collection of names is obviously an ongoing activity of the Board in response to growing cities and the establishment of new forests, reserves and other features and the identification of previously unnamed features.

Modern technology including remote sensing and digitisation of topographical information enables and requires a high degree of accuracy in the data registered for each geographical feature. In the 1960's when data collection began, coordinates to the nearest minute sufficed. Coordinates are now recorded to the nearest 5 seconds.

The slowing down of names collection has enabled the Board to address some of its other functions :-

. determination of suburb and locality boundaries

. publication of the gazetteer

. publication of a dictionary of Aboriginal place names

DETERMINATION OF SUBURB AND LOCALITY BOUNDARIES

During the past two years, a primary focus of the Board's activities has been the determination of suburban boundaries in the metropolitan areas. It has naturally followed that the boundaries of rural locations should also be defined.

The response of local councils and residents has been most pleasing and the Board has been able to define the boundaries of most suburbs according to common local preceptions. In a very few notable exceptions, the Board's proposal did not have local support but concensus was achieved through negotiations and compromise.

Suburb boundaries, once formalised, are digitised to form an important layer in the State's Digital Cadastral Data Base. This data will eventually be accessed by most Government Departments, local councils and others and will serve to reinforce the suburban boundaries defined by the Geographical Names Board. The instances of people tryinng to resolve which of ten different adresses, used by various public authorities for one suburban property, is correect, should be eliminated.

The Geographical Nmaes Board acknowledges that full community acceptance of defined suburban boundaries will take some years, but appreciates the cooperation of Australia Post and UBD who have, through their own activities, promoted the suburb boundary programme.

Many rural councils have opted to implement the Corio Rural Road Numbering system simultaneously with the definition of locality boundaries.

Although rural road numbering in not presently a function of the Geographical Names Board, it goes hand in hand with the boundaries programme. It enables country residents to have a meaningful, unique adress which does not rely on local knowledge. The rural road

number assigned to each property is calculated by rounding the quotent of the distance from the town centre and 100, with odd numbers on one side of the road and even numbers on the other. The system helps people to find any address without the mistake of calling at the wrong "Lot 1".

ABORIGINAL NOMENCLATURE

The Board has always preferred Aboriginal Names, but actually only a small proportion of new names are of Aboriginal origin. It is pleasing that Government authorities are submitting more Aboriginal names and the Board has also had several requests to reinstate Aboriginal names in place of assigned English names.

It is anticipated this trend will continue as Local Land Councils gain control of more land.

There is great interest in the origins of Aboriginal names. The Board has had to rely on just a few publications for reference when dealing with such inquiries; often without success.

The Board has recently microfilmed several thousand pages of documents from the Anthopological Society of Australasia which disbanded in 1908. Amoungst the documents were questionnaires completed as part of the society's collection of Aboriginal names and their meaning from throughout Australia. Although the society did publish some of what was collected, words from diverse areas were grouped together without identifying the area of origin. This was of little use for research purposes.

It is hoped to make copies of the micrifilms available to other nomenclature authorities and research institutes in Australia. The original are to be deposited in the Mitchell Library, Sydney. It is believed these documents contain a wealth of information about Aboriginal place names that has been hitherto unobtainable.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Geographical Names Board consists of eight members and is chaired by the Surveyor General. The Act is being reviewed and the number of members is likely to be reduced. It is also anticipated that one place on the Board will be occupied by a member of the Aboriginal community.

The purpose for the changes to the Board's membership is that in the Board's early days the overwhelming task of gathering and regisering long-used names sanctioned the Board's make-up and its insistence on technical accuracy. The Board is now making more community based decisions rather that technically based decisions to keep it relevant with the 1980's. This philosophy has been endorsed by acceptance of the Board's decisions in the community.

PUBLICATIONS

In 1991 the Board published the "Index of PLace Named In New South Wales" which listed locational details of about six thousand towns, villages, suburbs and localities in the State. This has been extremely well received and it is hoped to publish an updated edition later in 1992.

The Geographical Names Board commissioned an historical author to write a book about New South Country Towns three years ago. This work is now with the publisher and will be available later this year.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

AUTHORITY

Place Names Committee

c/o Department of Lands and Housing

P.O Box 40246

CASUARINA, DARWIN

AUSTRALIA.

ACTIVITIE

The Place Names Committee investigates and recommends to the Minister for Lands and Housing Names for public places and geographical features within The Northern Territory.

Earlier work mainly dealt with street nomenclature in urban centres in the Territory in consultation with Local Government, but the main emphasis of it's work has been more recently directed to the investigation of features names in support of topographic mapping and charting.

In 1992 particular attention is being given to the setting up of a "Northern Territory Gazetteer" with a comprehensive format which will cover all N.T features, thier description, position, status of the name, the history and origin of the feature name etc. With increasing calls on this data retrieval process, there is a need to build up and enhance the earlier attempts towards compiling a Gazetter.

A Territory contribution towards "Toponymic Guidelines for Australia" is hopefully being processed towards considered on by the Sixth UNGEGN meeting in New York on Geographical Name Standardisation. Work on the Regional Bibliographic record of texts and articles on Toponymy, Etymology & Place Names being compiled for the South East Asian and Pacific South West Division of U.N.G.E.G.N which should inform member countries of the relevant toponymic material in it's area.

Indigenous place names in Australia - aboriginal place names - is of concern to Australians and particularly those in the Northern Territory where the provisions of the Federal Aboriginal Land Rights Act applies and has a particular effort on place names, where land is now held by traditional owners. Recent moves towards refining policies on the dual naming process caters for names to be used for the two cultures, European and Aboriginal where they jointly use National Parks etc now administered by the Aboriginal owners under the

decisions of grants made on the land claims under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act.

Apart from the use of the dual naming process, already in use in Canada and South Africa and other countries, a great deal needs to be done on documenting the history and origin of aboriginal toponyms by linguists if aboriginal culture is to survive.

The National Toponymy Project at Armidale is aimed at setting up a series of Dictionaries of Australian Place Names (inclusive of many Aboriginal toponyms) is commencing it's work towards publication for the year 2001. A Northern Territory Dictionary of Place Names is planned like the excellent is used in South Australian is a target for this Authority based on an upgraded N.T. Gazetter.

STATE OF QUEENSLAND

Place Names in the State of Queensland are controlled by the Oueensland Place Names Act 1988, which presently vests the power of decision on place names with the Governor in Council, advised by the Minister for Land Management, who, in turn, is advised by the Surveyor-General.

The officers administering the Act are employed within the Department of Lands, which absorbed the previous Department of Geographic Information in late 1989. The Department of Lands is committed to an energetic program of regionalisation of functions, which will involve devolution of some place names responsibilities to Regional Directors during 1992. Place names proposals will be initially received, researched and mapped by Regional staff, before being forwarded to Corporate Headquarters for processing under the provisions of the Act.

The Place Names Data Base is scheduled to be expanded by the addition of toponymic data during 1992-94.

STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Authority

Geographical Names Advisory Committee

% Department of Lands

GPO Box 1047

ADELAIDE SA 5001

AUSTRALIA

Since the last United Nations Conference a new Geographical Names Act has been passed coming into operation on 9th January 1992.

The major effects of this Act was to:-

a) alter the status of the Geographical Names Board to an advisory committee;

b) bind the Crown, thus requiring other government agencies to adhere to the conditions of the Act;

c) increase the powers of the Minister responsible for the Act;

d) better control the use of estate names associated with real estate development;

e) allow for dual naming using both the Aboriginal name and the European name for specific features.

The new committee, known as the Geographical Names Advisory Committee, consists of the Surveyor-General (as chairman) and five other persons. The membership provides for representation by an Aboriginal person, and includes expertise from town planning, history, heritage, mapping and public records research.

The role of the committee is to advise the Surveyor-General who then makes a recommendation to the Minister of Lands who has the power to alter, agree or disagree with

the recommendation.

Activities

The nomenclature related activities undertaken in South Australia has changed very little since the last Conference.

The area where greatest change has been noticed is in relation to the recording and use of place names of Aboriginal origin. Changes have been made in the legislation to allow for the full recognition of the names of Aboriginal origin as well as the name of European origin for specific features. Support staff have now been involved in four projects aimed at recording and using Aboriginal place names.

The result of these projects has been the recording of over 1200 Aboriginal place names. Most of these names will be used in mapping following authorisation from the relevant Aboriginal community. A pleasing side benefit has been the restoration to the Aboriginal people of place names and ancillary information taken from the records of early anthropologists that have been lost by the Aboriginal people due to cultural erosion.

A significant proportion of the resources of the Committee and support staff is used in the investigation of proposals to alter existing suburban areas or create new suburbs associated with metropolitan Adelaide. Emphasis is being placed on the fringe areas where larger suburbs are being created to cater for the semi-rural land used found in such areas. Some of the larger country centres are also being investigated.

The State Gazetteer is continuing to grow, now containing over 47,000 records. This represents a 42% growth since the last conference. The gazetteer is now maintained only as a computer record.

As well as using the names recorded from the Aboriginal Place Names projects, there has been the occasional requests to name features after early European explorers or settler.

STATE OF TASMANIA

AUTHORITY

The Nomenclature Board of Tasmania

Department of Environment and Planning

GPO Box 44A

HOBART, TAS. 7001

ACTIVITIES

The Board's current work is mostly in connection with 1:25 000 mapping, which now covers the whole State apart from some remote Areas of the south west and the major offshore Islands.

Road Names for rural subdivisions are submitted regularly and names for other features are suggested by associations and individuals.

Matters of particular interest which came before the Board include:

Names for sections of highways bypassed by realignment

Aboriginal names for a wide variety of features.

Naming of lakes in the central highlands.

The development of a dictionary of generic terms for roads and other man made features including parks and reserves

There continued to be relatively few objections to decisions of the Board.

As part of an ongoing project records pertaining to place names and their origin are being stored on computer. In the long term this will allow for the somewhat out-of-date card

system to become a secondary source of information.

An increasing number of inquiries from the public for information of an historical nature are being received.

The membership of the Board is currently due for re-appointment and efforts are being made to insure that a greater number of relevant community groups are represented.

STATE OF VICTORIA

AUTHORITY

PLACE NAMES COMMITTEE

2 Treasury Place

Melbourne 3002

Tel. 651 2415

Fax. 652 2353

The Place Names Committee was established under Part II of the Survey Co-ordination Act 1958. The Committee's functions is to oversee and co-ordinated the naming of places in Victoria.

MEMBERS

J. R. PARKER Surveyor-General (Chairperson) (ex officio)

J. A. CROUGH Manager Cadastral Services, Survey and Mapping Victoria (ex officio)

K. T. BOURNE Manager, Survey Services Branch, Land Titles Office (ex officio)

Mrs M. SHEEHAN Nominee of the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Urban Growth. Appointed under Section 24 (2)(d)

W. L. J. CROFTS Nominee of the Municipal Association of Victoria. Appointed under Sect;on 24 (2)(e)

D. S. GARDEN Nominee of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria Appointed under Section 24 (2)(f)

E. D. FESL Nominee of the Minister for Aboriginal affairs. Appointed under Section 24 (2)(g)

Secretary: R. D. McLEOD

REPORT

The Place Names Committee is constituted under the Survey Co-ordination Act 1958 to co-ordinated the naming of places in Victoria. A direct Budget appropriation is made for the Committee members fees; all other costs together with administrative and secretarial support, are covered by Survey and Mapping Victoria.

The Committee met on seven occasions during 1990-91.

Public interest in the naming of places and its importance to historical record keeping continues to grow with an increasing number of enquiries being received during the year.

Allocation of Names

During the year, the Committee processed 98 post Primary School name changes following a request from the Ministry for Education and Training to change all High and Technical Schools to Secondary Colleges; re-defined part of the boundary of the City of Wirribee; assigned three new locality names for the City of Kellor, one for the City of Berwick and one for the Shire of Ballarat; corrected the spelling of an Inner-city locality.

The Committee received a submission from the Koorie Tourism Unit of the Victorian Tourist Commission and Brambuk to restore Koorie names to landscape features in and around the Grampians National Park. The Committee requested comments from a cross-section of government departments, public and private organisations to assist them in their deliberations before advertising it's intentions. Public response to the proposal brought in some 57,000 signatures on petitions opposing the name changes together with some letters of objection. The Committee has referred the matter to the Minister for his determination as is required under the Act when objections are lodged against a proposal.

A submission was received from the City of Geelong to assign the name Rippleside to part of North Geelong. Objections were received to the proposal and the Committee referred the matter to the Minister for his determination.

A submission was received from the City of Malvern to re-name Chadstone to Malvern East. The Committee sought comments from various organisations to assist them in their deliberations before advertising it's intention. Public response to the proposal brought some 120 letters of objection and some 1400 signatures on petitions opposing the name change. The Committee has referred the matter to the Minister for his determination.

The Committee assigned 178 names, advertised its intention to assign 178 names and inspected 138 mapsheets, making corrections where necessary and then approving the place names on the mapsheets.

One name was assigned by the Minister after investigation by the Committee, following

receipt of objections to a proposal.

A list of all place names assigned during 199O-91 is available from the Secretary.

Current Project

The Committee recently converted the Register of Place Names from a "mainframe" type computer to an IBM compatible personal computer system using dbase format files. The Register has been broken down into 3 main data files for convenience and ease of handling, these being; REGISTER, ROADS and HOMESTEADS and contain approx 31300, 18900 and 11500 records respectively. The register is currently under revision and a new edition is anticipated to be available September/October this year.

The Committee's "Guidance notes", which sets out the policy and procedures to be followed in submitting a new name for approval, was the subject of an extensive revision which necessitated a total re-write, the document is now titled "PROCEDURES AND POLICY CONCERNING THE NAMING AND SPELLING OF PLACE NAMES". The document has subsequently been distributed to all Municipalities in Victoria for their information and to assist them in compiling the submission.

STATE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

AUTHORITY

Geographic Names Committee

Department of Land Administration

Cathedral Avenue

PERTH WA 6000

AUSTRALIA

Activities

The Western Australian Geographic Names Committee, responsible for advising the Minister for Lands on the naming of towns, places and streets within the State has been very active since the last conference. Guidelines for naming have been set for roads, parks and reserves and suburban areas, with particular attention being given to standardising boundaries for urban areas and the naming of many islands and other features in remote areas.

The Geographic Names Section in the Cartographic Services Branch of the Department of Land Administration are responsible for Secretariat functions, and a staff of seven are active with:

1. Maintenance of the States names data base (Geonoma) of approx. 50,000 road names and

45,000 feature names. In the period of review 5600 new feature names and 5000 new road names have been added to the data base.

2. Investigation and approval of new names. The 10,600 names referred to above have been investigated and approved.

3 . Plan maintenance - official plan records are kept and maintained showing the correct spelling and position of all named roads and features within the state. These plans are used to maintain the accuracy of topographical and cadastral plans produced for all government agencies within the state.

4. Enquiry response and editing services - staff respond to approx 1800 written proposals and enquiries and 4500 verbal enquiries per year and edit maps and textual information for government and private map producers.

A small quarterly publication ~Geographic Name Approval~ in Western Australia" is also produced and supplied to interested mapping, local government, library and geographic names authorities within Australia and overseas. It is a very successful means of informing relevant organisations of geographic names changes, particularly for mapping.

AUSTRALIAN ANTARCTIC TERRITORY

AUTHORITY

The Antarctic Names And Medal Committee,

C/- Antarctic Division,

Department of Arts, Sport, Environment and Territories

Channel Highway,

KINGSTON TAS. 7050

AUSTRALIA

ACTIVITIES

The Committee is the authority on Names in The Australian Arctic Territory, Heard Island and the McDonold Islands. It is responsible for the investigation and acceptance or rejection of all name proposals. Names approved are subject to confirmation by the responsible Minister before being officially recognised. Names for MacQuarie Island are considered by the Committee and then referred with recommendations to the Nomenclature Board of Tasmania.

A Gazetteer of the Australian Antarctic Territory (name and position only) was published in November, 1983. It gives the history of the Antarctic Names and Medal Committee, outlines

place names principles and criteria and describes the procedure for proposing new names. The names list controls the decisions of the Committee approve the Minister until July, 1983. A further Gazetteer is currently being prepared.

HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE

Names of Offshore Features

General responsibility for the names of offshore features in the Australian area of hydrographic and oceanographic interest rests with the Hydrographic Science of the Royal Australian Navy. This organisation is a member of the Committee for Geographic Names in Australia and is the Australian representative of the International Hydrographic Organisation. It consults with the State nomenclature authorities and the Australian Antarctic Names and Polar Medals Committee.

The adoption by Australia in recent years of some the general principles regarding offshore boundaries of the 1982 United Nations Law of the Sea, and enabling domestic legislation, has varied the method of direct Australian involvement in offshore feature names.

In November 1990 Australia adopted a Twelve Mile Territorial Sea but restricted the jurisdiction of the individual States and Territories of the Commonwealth to a Three Mile Territorial Sea. Any geographic name proposal within the Three Mile Limit is Generally the responsibility of the State of Territory in consultation with the RAN Hydrographic Service.

Co-ordinating the names of Geographic features outside the Three Mile Limit, to edge of the Continental Shelf, as defined in the 1958 United Nations Convention on the Continental Shelf, is accepted by the RAN Hydrographic Service. It should be noted that the Australian Government has announced its intention to declare an Exclusive Economic Zone during 1992; when this occurs, responsibility for nomenclature will generally extend to the 200 mile limit.

In areas outside the present area of direct Australian nomenclature responsibility, but within the adjacent area of Australian oceanographic interest, geographic names proposals are co-ordinated through the Sub-Committee on Geographic Names and Nomenclature of Ocean Bottom Features of the Joint IOC/IHO Guiding Committee for the General Bathometric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO).

The RAA Hydrographic Service is the charting authority for papua New Guinea. Any Geographic name proposal for features in waters adjacent to Papua New Guinea are processed by the RAN Hydrographic Service with the relevant Papua New Guinea authority being kept informed.

ACTIVITIES

National Charting Programme.

Since the 5th Conference, approximately 90 new charts and new editions have been published for waters adjacent to Australia, Papua New Guinea and the Australian Antarctic

Territory. An active programme is in place which endeavours to ensure that only approved names are charted, and that any collect with a name in use is resolved with the relevant authority.

International Charting Programme.

The RAN Hydrographic Service publishes, either as the original producer or as adapted reprints of another nation, 10 charts of the small scale International Series. An active programme is being developed to ensure conformity between names shown on the various national versions of a particular chart.

Bathometric Mapping Programme.

During 1991 four bathometric maps of the Australian Offshore Resource Map Series were published. This series, published by the Australian Bureau of Mineral Resources in conjunction with the RAN Hydrographic Service and the Bureau of Rural Resources will cover most of the proposed Exclusive Economic Zone and the potential Australian Continental margins in 32 sheets at a scale of 1,000,000. This coverage is considerably more detailed than that previously available and a large number of features have had names proposed. One sheet so far processed had 18 new names. All new name proposals have generally been in accordance with IOC/IHO BP 0008, Part ll Standardization of Undersea Feature Names and have been forwarded through IHO.